1: Evans-Pritchard E-5 (1931, 1936) 1940
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co-ordination of activities and less scope for leadership. Only in war is there any lengthy direct co-operation. Men noted for their prowess and ability stir up among the youths enthusiasm for a raid against the Dinka or a fight against another tribal section, and direct what simple tactics are employed, but these men have no political status or permanent leadership. The warriors mobilise in local divisions of their own accord, for there are no regiments and companies under officers, and in fighting they follow the most forward and courageous among them. Some of these warriors become renowned and their reputation quickly attracts recruits for raids. Two of the most famous war leaders were Latjor who led the Jikany tribes, and Biliit who led the Lou, eastwards. Neither had any ritual qualifications, but both were men of outstanding ability who were members of the dominant clans of their tribes. It is not said by Nuer that either established any political control, or even had great authority, in their tribes. The role of prophets in war is examined later. Between tribal segments there are no other joint activities that require organisation and direction.

XII

The lack of governmental organs among the Nuer, the absence of legal institutions, of developed leadership, and, generally, of organised political life is remarkable. Their state is an acephalous kinship state and it is only by a study of the kinship system that it can be well understood how order is maintained and social relations over wide areas are established and kept up. The ordered anarchy in which they live accords well with their character, for it is impossible to live among Nuer and conceive of rulers ruling over them.

The Nuer is a product of hard and egalitarian upbringing, is deeply democratic, and is easily roused to violence. His turbulent spirit finds any restraint irksome and no man recognises a superior. Wealth makes no difference. A man with many cattle is envied, but not treated differently from a man with few cattle. Birth makes no difference. A man may not be a member of the dominant clan of his tribe, he may even be of Dinka descent, but were another to allude to the fact he would run a grave risk of being clubbed.

1: Evans-Pritchard E-S (1931, 1936) 1940
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That every Nuer considers himself as good as his neighbour is evident in their every movement. They strut about like lords of the earth, which, indeed, they consider themselves to be. There is no master and no servant in their society, but only equals who regard themselves as God's noblest creation. Their respect for one another contrasts with their contempt for all other peoples. Among themselves even the suspicion of an order rises a man and he either does not carry it out or he carries it out in a casual and dilatory manner that is more insulting than a refusal. When a Nuer wants his fellows to do something he asks it as a favour to a kinsman, saying, 'Son of my mother, do us-and-us', or he includes himself in the command and says: 'Let us depart', 'Let the people return home', and so forth. In his daily relations with his fellows a man shows respect to his elders, to his 'fathers', and to certain persons of ritual status, within the circuit of its reference, so long as they do not infringe on his independence, but he will not submit to any authority which clashes with his own interests and he does not consider himself bound to obey any one. I was once discussing the Shilluk with a Nuer who had visited their country, and he remarked, 'They have one big chief, but we have not. This chief can send for a man and demand a cow or he can cut a man's throat. Whoever saw a Nuer do such a thing? What Nuer ever came when some one sent for him or paid any one a cow?'

I found Nuer pride an increasing source of amusement. It is as remarkable as their constant aloofness and reticence. I have already described how Nuer would interrupt my inquiries. I mention here three incidents typical of the cavalier way in which they treated me. On one occasion I asked the way to a certain place and was deliberately deceived. I returned in chagrin to camp and asked the people why they had told me the wrong way. One of them replied, 'You are a foreigner, why should we tell you the right way? Even if a Nuer who was a stranger asked us the way we should say to him, "You continue straight along th..t path", but we would not tell him that the path forked. Why should we tell him? But you are now a member of our camp and you are kind to our children, so we will tell you the right way in future.'

In this same camp, at the end of my stay, when I was sick and being removed by steamer, I asked the people to carry my tent and belongings to the river's edge. They refused, and my servant, a Nuer youth, and I had to do it ourselves. When I asked him why the people were churlish, he replied, 'You told them to carry your belongings to the river. That is why they refused. If you had asked them, saying, "My mother's sons, assist me", they would not have refused.'